

February 2, 2009

EXHIBIT 16  
DATE 2/3/09  
HB 172

Dear Committee Members:

I would like to express my support for HB 172, An Act to Create a Provisional Hunter Safety and Education Certificate for Persons with Certain Developmental Disabilities. I am a veteran educator of twenty-five years. I have been a general education classroom teacher, special education teacher and also an administrator of special education for eight years. I am a hunter safety instructor with thirty-four years of service. I have taught multiple students that are developmentally delayed in both the classroom and in hunter safety classes. I currently have two students with significant cognitive disabilities in a class I am teaching now.

It is essential that we allow these students that have cognitive delays the opportunity to participate in an activity that can bring tremendous joy to them, not to mention the learning opportunities that they will experience with a mentor in the field. I have been able to certify a number of students with a developmental delay due to my experience in working with students with this type of handicapping condition and in working with the parents of these students. I have seen the joy of the parent when the student has been certified and able to participate in a family event, bringing some sort of normalcy to the family and student.

Please to not allow persons with a developmental delay to be discriminated against because of a disability. If a written test is the only requirement holding them back please allow for an alternative route to certification so they are able to participate in the activity of hunting.

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at 406-868-3824. I apologize that I couldn't be present in person for this hearing but family obligations prevent it.

Sincerely,

Drew Uecker

Administrator, Great Falls Public Schools and Hunter Education Instructor